

PT PHONE HOME PROGRAM

HON. JACK QUINN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the hard work of my constituents back in Buffalo, NY, as we celebrate the completion of the PT Phone Home Program at the Buffalo VA Medical Center on Saturday.

PT Phone Home is a cost-effective volunteer program which solicits equipment, labor, and donations from a variety of groups for patient bedside telephone service at VAMC's across the Nation. VA officials, NYNEX, the Service Employees International Union [SEIU] Local 200C, and the Communications Workers of America [CWA] Local 1122 have been collaborating to bring the PT Phone Home Program to Buffalo.

A patient bedside telephone initial report issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs recognized that without the efforts of the PT Phone Home Program and its volunteers, the bedside telephone project would not have been started at this point.

With the services of PT Phone Home, VA has estimated that \$18 million will allow the planned installation of patient bedside telephone systems to be completed. Without these services, estimates run closer to \$80 million. Without the direct involvement of the volunteer organizations mobilized under PT Phone Home, the cost of such a program is certainly prohibitive.

Experience with this worthwhile program has convinced me that bedside telephones are an absolute necessity for our VA hospitals nationwide. Bedside telephone service allows nurses and support staff to spend more time on clinical activities and increases patient morale by allowing veterans invaluable contact with their family and friends.

The veterans who use our veteran hospitals are here because of the sacrifices they were willing to make for their country. They were willing to serve in the name of freedom, and I am very happy to be part of an effort to give them something in return.

I believe we owe all participants in the PT Phone Home Program a great debt of gratitude and would ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing those who made the Buffalo project successful.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain you agree that all the medicine in the world cannot replace the therapeutic value of contact with family and friends.

CAPITAL GAINS TAX BREAKS IN REPUBLICAN BILL WILL BENEFIT A PRIVILEGED FEW

HON. SAM GIBBONS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, the capital gains exclusion and indexing in the Republican tax plan provides a huge benefit for a very small number of wealthy taxpayers.

The Treasury Department tells us that only 8 percent of the population realize capital

gains in any given year. Even among those with high incomes it is not universal—about 52 percent of those with incomes of \$200,000 or more and 23 percent of those with incomes between \$100,000 and \$200,000 realize capital gains every year. Truly, a privileged few.

Both the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Department of Treasury agree that most of the benefit of a cut in capital gains taxes will go to the richest 6 percent of all taxpayers: 76 percent—a full three-quarters—of the tax benefit will go to those with incomes of \$100,000 or more.

The Republicans have tried to characterize the capital gains tax cut as a major benefit to ordinary Americans, those who realize a capital gain infrequently when they sell Grandma's farm or a family business upon retirement. This is patently misleading.

Seventy-one percent of all capital gains are realized by taxpayers who realize capital gains almost every year, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation. These financially sophisticated high rollers receive most of the dollars of capital gains, so naturally they are the ones who will get most of the benefit from the Republican plan—not ordinary Americans who work hard for what they earn.

And, wealthy repeaters who realize gains almost every year are the ones who will be helped the most by the Republican plan.

The Republicans have tried to characterize the Democrats' analysis as flawed by saying that the numbers that Democrats have quoted on the average benefit per taxpayer were computed on the basis of the whole population, instead of just taking account of those who actually receive the tax cuts. When the computations are done on the basis that the Republicans prefer, the average tax cuts are much bigger.

Treasury Department figures show that when the total capital gains tax cut going to those with incomes of \$200,000 or more is averaged over only the 52 percent of taxpayers at that income level who realize capital gains, the result is a tax cut of almost \$7,800 per taxpayer in 1996. If that figure simply kept pace with inflation, it would be \$9,300 by 2002.

HONORING HISPANIC-AMERICAN WWII SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring the attention of my colleagues to a very important and emotional event that is occurring on March 31, 1995—the laying of a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by the widow of Sgt. Abelardo Montanez.

Sergeant Montanez was killed in the invasion of Attu, AL, in World War II. His widow, Mrs. Esperanza Ramos Montanez, will lay the wreath today on behalf of the widows and mothers of the Hispanic-American WWII service men and women, at the Arlington National Cemetery.

The Armed Services of WWII were vastly different from the Armed Services of 1995. In the 1940's, the United States was still a segregated society, both in civilian and in military life. While the segregation of African Ameri-

cans it is a widely discussed and remembered fact, it is not so widely known that Hispanic Americans were also segregated into their own units during the war.

Many Hispanic Americans served proudly in WWII. They fought honorably to advance the cause of democracy and freedom in the world; and they died on battlefields far from their homes and families all over Europe and in the Pacific. In WWII alone, 12 Hispanics received the Medal of Honor. Interestingly enough, per capita, there are more Hispanic recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor than any other ethnic group, for meritorious service to their country in times of war.

In fact, WWII was a transforming event for the Hispanic community. Many Hispanics who served in the Armed Forces returned to the United States to blatant discrimination in their hometowns. Many built on their gallant service after they returned home by organizing and making it known that discrimination was no longer acceptable.

One of the organizations that galvanized Hispanic veterans into a potent political force was the American G.I. Forum, founded by my political and personal mentor, Dr. Hector Garcia, also a winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor, of Corpus Christi, TX. The G.I. Forum, and other organizations founded by veterans—for veterans—registered voters and petitioned local and State governments to treat Hispanics equally with other elements of their communities.

The G.I. Forum will join the Ramos Family, and the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in this important—and long overdue—ceremony.

TRIBUTE TO CESAR CHAVEZ

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the birthdate of a genuine American hero, Cesar Chavez, which is on Friday, March 31. It is hard to summarize the accomplishments and impact of those citizens whose work not only changes the nature of the world in which they lived—but extends beyond their natural lives into the lives of those who will only know them by their legacy.

Just as every African-American citizen feels the impact of Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy in their lives, every Hispanic citizen, especially those who work the farms, fruit orchards and vegetable fields of America, will feel the impact of the life of Cesar Chavez.

Before Cesar, America's migrant workers had few rights. He became their voice and the force that fought for basic human liberties and labor rights.

When Cesar died he left a legacy to be emulated by future generations and the lessons learned will resonate for years to come. A legacy that will make migrant workers a full partner in the agricultural industry, and bring them to full membership in our society with all the benefits that full membership implies.

Ever so slowly, migrant workers are entering into the mainstream of our society and into a status for which they have long aspired and is

long overdue. Cesar's dream is moving towards reality. Whether it be by increasing education, work and training opportunities; continuing the fight to gain a liveable wage, benefits, and working conditions; or guaranteeing their access to full citizenship and the right to have their grievance addressed by whether legal means available.

As we move forward as a community towards ensuring equal opportunity, equal protections and equal membership for all peoples in our society, let us remember the contributions of one of the greatest teachers on the means and importance of this pursuit—Cesar Chavez.

TRIBUTE TO ALPHONSE AUCLAIR

HON. JACK REED

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Alphonse Auclair, a distinguished individual from Rhode Island who through his dedication and hard work, has selflessly served the people of Rhode Island in many capacities.

Mr. Auclair is a lifelong resident of Rhode Island. He was born in Woonsocket, RI and was educated in area schools. On his 18th birthday, November 9, 1942, Alphonse enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. After serving his country with valor and distinction in the Pacific, including the battle for Iwo Jima, Alphonse Auclair returned to Rhode Island.

Mr. Auclair served as a police officer in the city of Woonsocket from 1952 through 1977, when he was elected to represent his community in the Rhode Island State Senate. In this capacity, Mr. Auclair was a champion of veterans issues in Rhode Island. In 1962 he helped to found the St. Joseph's Veterans Association, which has played a key role in veterans affairs in Woonsocket ever since. In addition to working to improve the lives of Woonsocket's veterans, Mr. Auclair was instrumental in the building of a monument dedicated to the many Rhode Islander's that made the supreme sacrifice in the Vietnam war.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of Rhode Island, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a truly exceptional individual, Alphonse Auclair.

TURKEY MUST CEASE ITS RELENTLESS ATTACKS AGAINST THE KURDISH PEOPLE

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my extreme dismay and strong concerns about the recent actions of the Turkish Government.

The government in Turkey has once again decided that it is easier to address dissension around its borders with military force than to sit down to talk with those whose only wish is to seek freedom from overwhelming oppression.

You will hear from the Turkish Government that this recent excursion into Kurdish-held areas in Iraq is only aimed at stopping Kurdish

rebel groups from making raids into Turkey. We must not be fooled by what they say.

It is accepted policy in that country to deny official acknowledgement of a group that comprises close to 20 percent of its total population. Because they have no special protection under Turkish law, Kurdish civilians have been victim to a policy of discriminate harassment, persecution, even killing and wounding at the hands of the Turkish establishment.

The Turkish Government has been condemned time and time again by the United Nations, Helsinki Watch, and Amnesty International for denying Kurds the basic civil liberties. These include the right to freedom of self-determination and the right to freely express the richness of their cultural heritage.

Mr. Speaker, this current situation is no different. Thousands of Turkish-born Kurds are now living in northern Iraq, after fleeing Turkey last year because of harassment from Turkish officials. Their lives have been shattered because of the incessant attacks on their heritage, culture, and indeed, their very existence.

These civilians have been caught in the crossfire for too long. These civilians only seek the freedom to choose their own destinies. At the very least, this Government's response should be to say in no uncertain terms that they be allowed to pursue this very basic right.

However, Mr. Speaker, we may be also partly to blame for the ongoing crisis in the mountains of Iraq.

Not only does the Turkish Government receive vast amounts of United States financial aid, we and our allies also supply their government with large amounts of military hardware. These weapons are in turn being used to wipe out whole villages, to kill innocent women and children. We should follow the lead of the German Government and look to end our weapons trade with Turkey.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, all United States aid to Turkey should be reviewed in light of their history with other ethnic groups in Cyprus and Armenia. And just as important, that government's current activities in the mountains of Iraq should further make us question our priorities in that region.

Mr. Speaker, Turkey does have the right to protect its borders and to protect its citizens from terrorism. However, this very right cannot be used to justify continued harassment and persecution of innocent civilian populations.

We have supported the right of Iraqi-born Kurds to pursue independence from the regime in Baghdad. Our troops are in the mountains of northern Iraq at this moment, protecting Kurds from the Iraqi military. However, Mr. Speaker, we should look to protect the rights of all Kurds, regardless of where they were born.

The United States has warned the Turkish Government that we are watching. I will say also that the whole world should watch this situation very closely. This will not only hold that government accountable but will also force this country to reevaluate its foreign priorities and practices.

A TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE JUDGE NATHANIEL R. JONES

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand here today to honor a remarkable man from the 17th Congressional District of Ohio. Please join me today in honoring the Honorable Judge Nathaniel R. Jones on his retirement from the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Judge Jones has served on the bench of the Sixth Circuit, U.S. Court of Appeals since his appointment during the Carter administration in 1979. This accounts for 15 years of service to his country. In addition, Judge Jones has devoted much of his time outside the office to community events and civil rights activities. Judge Jones has the further distinction of having served the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as Chief Legal Counsel.

Mr. Speaker, it is rare that I have the opportunity to honor someone like Judge Nathaniel R. Jones who has given so much not only to his own community but also to the entire country. My sincere appreciation goes out to Judge Jones for the job he has done. May he be blessed with health, happiness and continued success in the years to come.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE ROMERO-BARCELÓ

HON. CARLOS A. ROMERO-BARCELÓ

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, reducing costly and unnecessary regulatory burdens has become a leading theme in the 104th Congress. Today, I am introducing legislation that promotes this goal. The Environmental Protection Agency has demanded that Puerto Rico institute costly secondary treatment at one of the island's wastewater treatment facilities despite any showing that it will improve the environment and without considering whether less costly alternatives would be equally or even more effective. This legislation, first, provides for an independent study of the relative costs, benefits, and feasibility of alternatives to secondary treatment for wastewater discharged through a deep ocean outfall from the Mayaguez wastewater treatment plant, and second, permits Puerto Rico to apply for, and EPA to consider, a waiver of secondary treatment requirements under the Clean Water Act if such a waiver is appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a reasonable, cost-effective solution to what has become an interminable, intractable series of negotiations and court battles between Puerto Rico and the EPA over abstruse points of administrative law—at considerable expense to the American taxpayers. Section 301(h) of the Clean Water Act provides that EPA may waive secondary treatment standards for publicly owned treatment works [POTW's] that meet certain effluent standards. But the EPA contends it is time-barred from considering a waiver application for the Mayaguez POTW.